

March 22, 2013

Weekly Views

The annual Correctional Professionals Assistance Fund of Indiana (CPAFI) Golf Open is scheduled for Friday, May 10, 2013, at the Eagle Creek Golf Course in Indianapolis. The cost remains the same as last year, just \$300 per foursome, which includes breakfast, lunch, dinner, 18 holes of golf, gifts, and prizes for the top three teams on each course. Please contact Michelle Bowlby (tytoddder@gmail.com) for more information or to submit a team. Proceeds will support the CPAFI.

Indianapolis Re-Entry Educational Facility Chaplain Keith Blackburn was a guest on the Katie Couric Show. The theme of that show was redemption. Chaplain Blackburn shared his story about his past criminal history, the crime that landed him in prison where he found solace in Christ, and how forgiveness from his victim has given him life anew. Blackburn, along with his victim and

other high profile guests, completed filming the show last Wednesday. The show will air on the ABC network at 3:00 p.m. March 25.

Illinois Department of Correction Program Director Kathleen Mattingly and Vandalia Correctional Center (VCC) Equine Instructor Jessie Maske spent a day with Barb Holcomb and offenders assigned to the equine management program at the Putnamville Correctional Facility. The guests observed classroom instruction and general operations of the equine program. VCC is scheduled to open a retired thoroughbred program in May 2013 and has used Putnamville as a model. The visit also included a tour of the PLUS, CLIFF and Prison Greyhound programs. (see photo right)



Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility (COLCF) held its semi-annual Community Advisory Board Meeting. Superintendent Kathy Griffin welcomed two new board members, Randy Sexton, Noble County Surveyor and Chad Kline, Nobel County Commissioner. A letter from a mother whose son is incarcerated at Chain O' Lakes was read to the board members, sharing how she is impressed with her son's improvement since being at the facility. Superintendent Griffin also outlined Governor Pence's Road Map for Indiana, speaking about how to take Indiana from Good to Great and asking the group for their suggestions for improving the facility. Chain O' Lakes Park Manager Sam Boggs gave a presentation on the IDOC and park partnership, outlining how last year COLCF offenders provided over 50,000 hours, with a cost saving of over \$400,000 in labor. Mr. Boggs summed it up stating "I can't imagine Chain O' Lakes Park without Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility."

The Westville Correctional Facility was graced with the inspirational and motivational teachings of Vic Porter, of Vic Porter Prison Ministries and founder of The Institute of Self-Worth. Mr. Porter spent two evenings at the facility delivering the message of "Leadership through Grace" to offenders in the Therapeutic Community. The message left such a positive impact on the offenders that the community sent letters to personally thank Mr. Porter for his presence at Westville. Vic Porter's Outreach Ministry travels to prisons in all 50 states and 103 countries around the world.

Staff from the Indiana State Prison (ISP) played a basketball game against the offender's basketball team. Staff were able to gain the lead at half time and continued to hold on to that lead for the victory. The final score was 72-63. The game was well received by the entire ISP staff and offender population. This was another example of ISP bridging the gap between staff and offenders at the State Prison.

It was "lights, camera, action" at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility. Indigo Films taped a segment of their highly popular "I (Almost) Got Away with It" show which airs on the Investigation Discovery Network. The crew interviewed an offender who eluded authorities for several days after escaping from prison over six years ago.

The Villages of Indiana President and CEO Sharon Pierce and Sandy Runkle, who serves as Program Director for the Indiana Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, visited the Pendleton Correctional Facility to meet with staff and PLUS offenders to discuss fundraisers and other activities planned for the facility in connection with National Prevent Child Abuse Month in April.

Miami Correctional Facility (MCF) hosted 55 high school students from Logansport Century Career Center for a Straight Talk Program. The students, who are part of a Criminal Justice Class taught by retired Indiana Department of Correction Superintendent Bruce Jordan, heard the stories from four offenders incarcerated at MCF and asked the offenders questions about life in prison.

The Indiana Women's Prison (IWP) Library, through matching grant opportunities and Net Literacy, has been able to expand computer programming by roughly 70%. They have also been able to begin facilitating a documentary group designed to increase awareness on hot topics such as politics, historical events, and health related issues, and have purchased 264 new titles. The addition of the new titles has allowed them to meet increasing offenders recreational reading requests, begin a GED study program, which is a peer facilitated program designed to give those offenders who seek out extra assistance with GED preparation one on one tutoring, and supplement additional research needs for both college students and DOL apprenticeship participants. The Library has also seen a 50% increase in functionally illiterate offenders coming forward to participate in the peer-tutored literacy program.